From: Morning Consult
To: lmartin@bakersfieldpd.us
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By Sam Sabin

Week in Review

2020 candidates on tech and antitrust

- Former Vice President and current Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden said "we should take a really hard look at" whether to break up large tech companies, but that it is "premature" to say if embracing a pro-breakup stance, such as the one laid out by Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), is the right call. Biden's comments follow similar ones made by presidential contenders Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) and Cory Booker (D-N.J.) on Facebook's size over the weekend, highlighting the growing presence of the regulation of tech companies in the race.

- Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders said "of course" he supports calls to break up

Facebook, noting that the country has "an increasingly monopolistic society" that relies on "a handful of very large corporations" with "too much power over consumers." Sanders did not respond to a question about whether he also supports the breakup of Google and Amazon.com Inc. as Warren has proposed.

Trump administration

- President Donald Trump signed an executive order banning U.S. telecommunications companies from purchasing foreign equipment that poses "an unacceptable risk" to national security, with the Commerce Department expected to write rules for reviewing transactions impacted by the ban in the next 150 days. While the order did not name a simple company or country, the Commerce Department separately announced that it had placed China's Huawei Technologies Co. and dozens of its affiliates on a trade black list.

- The White House is soliciting personal data such as names and contact information from Americans who say they have been impacted by anti-conservative bias on social media platforms, using a survey specifically asking respondents if they have had problems with Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter Inc. The Trump administration declined to disclose how it plans to use the responses.

- The White House declined to sign an international and industry-wide call to action, organized by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and French President Emmanuel Macron, to work to counter the spread of hate on social media, citing free speech concerns. Amazon, Facebook, Microsoft Corp., Twitter and Google, as well as 18 governments, endorsed the agreement, which comes as a response to the livestreamed terrorist attacks at two New Zealand mosques in March.

Telecommunications and wireless

- T-Mobile US Inc. and Sprint Corp. are considering certain concessions to ensure that their proposed $26.5 billion merger is approved, including possibly separating and selling their prepaid businesses, according to people familiar with the discussions. Other concessions being considered include selling airwave licenses and setting up a fourth carrier through a network-leasing arrangement, the people said, in an effort to ease regulator concerns

that the deal could hinder U.S. wireless competition.

- Verizon Communications Inc., AT&T Inc., Sprint and T-Mobile said in letters this month to the Federal Communications Commission's Jessica Rosenworcel that they have mostly halted partnerships with third parties to share their customers' location data. Rosenworcel, who released the letters publicly today, said she is still awaiting answers about the agency's own investigation into the practices, which has been ongoing for the past year.

- The FCC will vote on a proposed rule change at next month's open commission meeting that would make it easier for telecommunications companies to allow customers to block unwanted robocalls. Under the proposed rule, phone carriers would be able but not required to automatically register customers for call-blocking technology, rather than have them opt-in manually.

Antitrust

- Facebook is facing 20 years of government oversight on its privacy practices under a settlement deal with the Federal Trade Commission over alleged privacy abuses, according to a source with knowledge of the discussions, after lawmakers urged the agency to go beyond a $5 billion civil penalty. The FTC's settlement announcement could be a month away, one source said, and the company was also given a 20-year oversight requirement in its 2011 settlement with the agency.

- Italian antitrust regulators are investigating Google to determine if the company is abusing its position in the smart device market after Google allegedly refused to add the "Enel X Recharge" app to its Android Auto app, which allows users to use some phone tools while driving. Regulators expect the probe to be complete by May 30 next year, and Google said it is "reviewing the complaint."

- The Supreme Court ruled that a class-action lawsuit against Apple Inc. alleging that the company hinders competition by requiring device owners to only purchase apps and services through its App Store can move forward. The lawsuit, which was filed by a group of device owners, could create a precedent for similar antitrust claims against other tech companies.

Cybersecurity and privacy

- San Francisco is officially the first city to ban local government use of facial recognition technology, with the measure passing in an 8-1 Board of Supervisors vote. The ordinance requires city departments already relying on surveillance technology to disclose their current usage and mandates that any new government technology that collects or stores data be approved by the board.

- California's Senate blocked a bill endorsed by state Attorney General Xavier Becerra aimed at expanding residents' ability to sue companies for violating the state's forthcoming data privacy law. Under the law, which takes effect in 2020, consumers can only sue over a data breach and file complaints about possible violations to the attorney general's office.

- Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said that two counties in the state were hacked during the 2016 presidential election, but that the intrusions "had no effect" on vote totals. DeSantis, who was briefed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation on Friday, was not allowed to disclose which counties were impacted.

Facebook

- Facebook is implementing new restrictions to its livestreaming video tool in response to the March mosque shootings in New Zealand that will temporarily bar any user who breaks certain community rules from using the service after their first offense, with the possibility of a 30-day ban period. The move is a change from the company's previous policy, where users weren't restricted from Facebook Live until they had broken the rules multiple times.

- Facebook banned Israeli political consulting and lobbying firm Archimedes Group from the platform after discovering that it was behind a campaign to spread disinformation and disrupt elections in several countries across sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America. Archimedes also spent about $800,000 on fake advertisements, with some of the ads dating back to 2012, Facebook said.

- Facebook said it will increase its minimum wage for North American contractors to $18 from $15, with plans for slightly higher rates of $20 to $22 per hour for workers based in New York City, the Bay Area and Washington, D.C. The changes will go into effect by mid-2020, the company

said.

What's Ahead

- The House and Senate are both in session this week.
- Senate Judiciary will examine the impact of data privacy legislation on the digital advertising ecosystem in a hearing on Tuesday.
- The House Oversight Committee will hold a hearing Wednesday examining the impact of facial recognition technology on civil rights and liberties.
- The Federal Communications Commission's next open commission meeting will be June 6. Agenda items include clarification on the agency's new call-blocking rules and an amendment to the commission's rules on aviation safety.

Events Calendar (All Times Local)

05/17/2019

Engine and the Charles Koch Institute's panel discussion on GDPR one year later	12:00 pm

05/20/2019

WSJ Future of Everything Festival

Interop ITX

05/21/2019

WSJ Future of Everything Festival

Interop ITX	
New America's launch of the 2019 Ranking Digital Rights Corporate Accountability Index	9:30 am
House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on the Kremlin's tools to "malign political influence"	10:00 am
Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on digital advertising and data privacy legislation	10:00 am
House Homeland Security Committee hearing on the cyber talent pipeline	2:00 pm
Senate Commerce Committee's communications subcommittee hearing on persuasive internet technology	2:30 pm

05/22/2019

WSJ Future of Everything Festival	
MIT Sloan CIO Symposium	
Interop ITX	
Senate Aging Committee's hearing on tech applications for aging and disabilities	9:30 am
House Oversight Committee's hearing on facial recognition and civil liberties	10:00 am
House Energy and Commerce Committee's hearing on its infrastructure bill	10:00 am
House Oversight Committee's hearing on U.S. election security	2:00 pm
Joint Economic Committee hearing on 2020 Census and how businesses use federal data	2:00 pm
Brookings Institution's event on algorithmic bias	2:00 pm

05/23/2019

WSJ Future of Everything Festival	

Interop ITX	
The Washington Post's event with Mayor Pete Buttigieg in its 2020 candidates series	9:00 am
American Enterprise Institute's event on negotiating with China	2:30 pm

View full calendar

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Morning Consult Tech Top Reads

1) US tariff revenues are way up, but China isn't paying for them
Dan Kopf, Quartz

2) Huawei Is a Target as Trump Moves to Ban Foreign Telecom Gear
Cecilia Kang and David E. Sanger, The New York Times

3) Exclusive: Trump expected to sign order paving way for U.S. telecoms ban on Huawei
David Shepardson, Reuters

4) They Were Promised Coding Jobs in Appalachia. Now They Say It Was a Fraud.
Campbell Robertson, The New York Times

5) Facebook facing 20-year consent agreement after privacy lapses: source
Diane Bartz, Reuters

6) Huawei to challenge U.S. export sanction which it says will harm America
David Shepardson and Diane Bartz, Reuters

7) Google Exec's Internal Email On Its Data Leak Policy Has Rattled Employees
Caroline O'Donovan, BuzzFeed News

8) White House declines to back Christchurch call to stamp out online extremism amid free speech concerns
Tony Romm and Drew Harwell, The Washington Post

9) Supreme Court rules against Apple, allowing lawsuit targeting App Store to proceed
Tony Romm and Robert Barnes, The Washington Post

10) Facebook Restricts Live Streaming After New Zealand Shooting
Cade Metz and Adam Satariano, The New York Times

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